

Top Secret

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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

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HIGHLIGHTS

North Vietnam accomplished a major resupply effort along the Demilitarized Zone and the southern areas of the DRV during the Tet truce. Hanoi radio on 11 February responded negatively to suggestions that the Tet truce be extended.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam: Allied forces have resumed 28 large-scale ground operations in South Vietnam, but without significant enemy contact (Para. 1). A total of 346 Communist truce violations, including 148 major and 198 minor incidents, were reported during the 96-hour Tet truce period, which ended at 6 p.m. EST on 11 February (Paras. 2-4). Multibattalion US Army units have successfully terminated Operation THAYER II after nearly four months in northeastern Binh Dinh Province (Para. 5). Operation PERSHING was launched on 11 February as part of the continuing allied spoiling campaign in northeast Binh Dinh Province (Para. 6).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam: There is nothing of significance to report.

III. Military Developments in North Vietnam: North Vietnam appears to have taken advantage of the Tet bombing standdown by engaging in a substantial logistics resupply effort in the southern DRV/DMZ area (Paras. 1-5). It is also possible that the North Vietnamese may have used the bombing lull to deploy SA-2 missiles in the DMZ (Para. 6).

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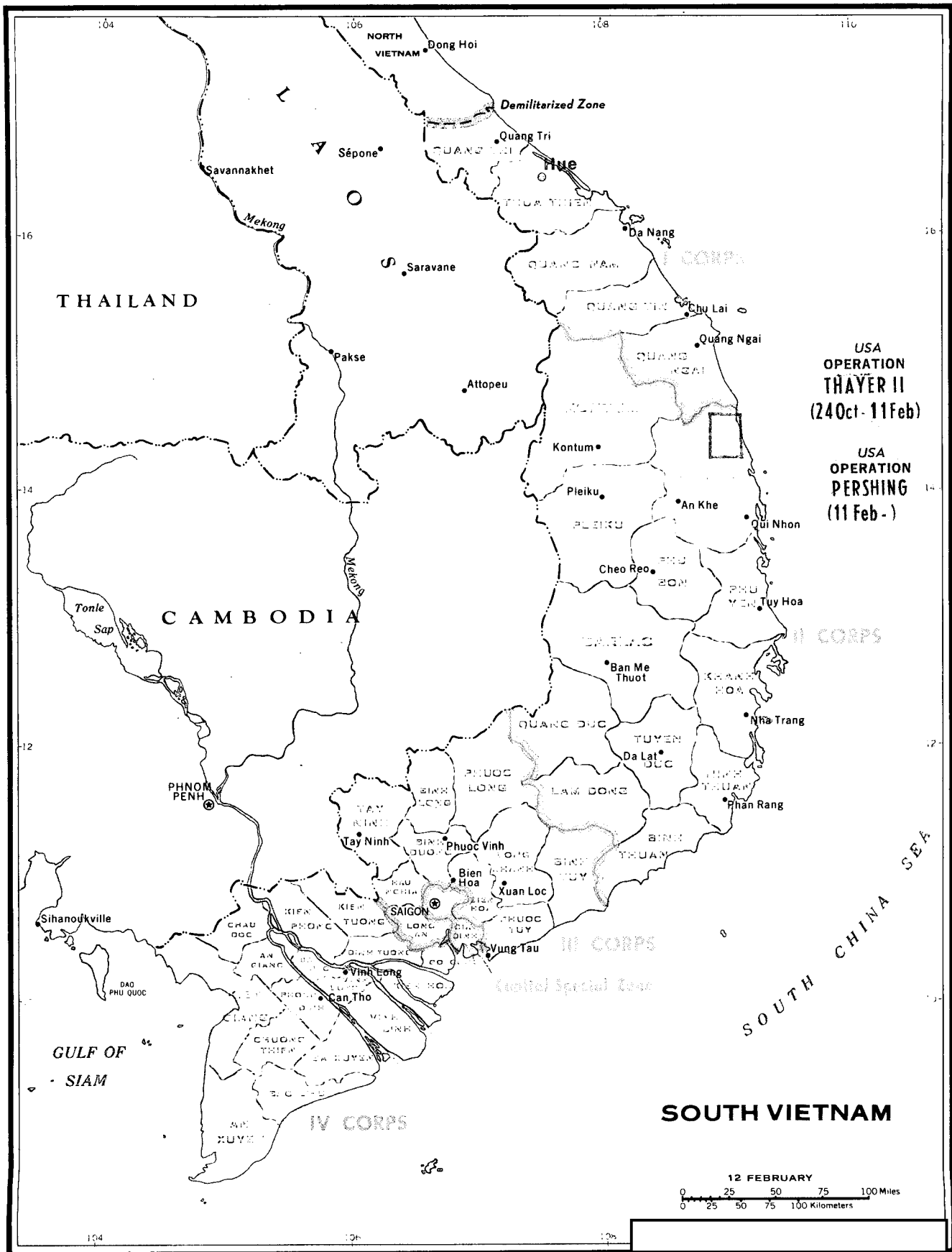
IV. Other Communist Military Developments:
There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: Hanoi radio has responded negatively to suggestions for extending the Tet cease-fire (Paras. 1-2). An Izvestia article has called for the US "alone" to signal a reversal of the escalation of the Vietnam war (Paras. 3-4).

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Allied forces resumed ground operations in South Vietnam at 6 p.m. EST on 11 February, the close of the Vietnamese Lunar New Year (Tet) cease-fire period. US combat units participated in 15 of the 28 battalion-sized or larger search-and-destroy operations in progress on 12 February; however, none of these operations reported significant enemy contact.

2. A total of 346 Communist truce violations, including 148 major and 198 minor incidents, were reported during the 96-hour Tet standdown. These actions resulted in cumulative friendly casualties of 29 killed (17 US, 10 SVN military, 2 SVN civilians), 199 wounded (158 US, 29 SVN military, 12 SVN civilians), and 4 missing (3 SVN military, 1 SVN civilian). Enemy losses have been placed at 116 killed and two captured. (Note: the figures involving Tet incidents and casualties are not final, and will increase as reports from outlying districts are received.)

3. At least two thirds of the enemy initiated actions were directed against US forces, and consisted primarily of small-unit forays against reconnaissance patrols and defensive positions. Significantly, no serious or large-scale incident such as the battalion-sized action of the Xmas truce or the massing of 1,000 troops near US Marine positions at Hue during the New Year's truce, were perpetrated by the Viet Cong. There appeared to have been a deliberate effort on the part of both GVN and Viet Cong forces to avoid clashes with one another. In this connection, a banner found on the body of a Viet Cong soldier killed near Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Air Base on 7 February contained denunciations of US forces, but stated that the Communists did not want to kill Vietnamese during Tet.

4. The following is a comparison of enemy truce violations during Tet 1966, Xmas 1966, New Year's 1966-67, and Tet 1967:

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| A. <u>FIRST 48 HOURS</u> | <u>Tet '66</u> | <u>Xmas '66</u> | <u>New</u> | | <u>Tet 67</u> |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| | | | <u>Year's</u> | <u>1966-67</u> | |
| Total Incidents | N/A | 101 | 169 | | 194 |
| Major Violations | 21 | 33 | 52 | | 67 |

| B. <u>96-HOUR PERIOD</u> | <u>Tet '66</u> | | <u>Tet '67</u> | |
|--------------------------|----------------|--|----------------|--|
| | | | | |
| Total Incidents | 100 | | 346 | |
| Major Violations | 34 | | 148 | |

5, Eight US Army battalions have terminated Operation THAYER II, a major search-and destroy ground sweep conducted from 24 October to 11 February in the northeastern quadrant of coastal Binh Dinh Province. The operation, controlled by the US 1st Air Cavalry Division and targeted against an estimated Communist force of 7,200 men, resulted in cumulative enemy losses of 1,744 killed, 150 captured, 2,100 suspects detained, and 479 weapons seized. American casualties totaled 199 killed, 853 wounded, and two missing. Air support included 170 B-52 strategic saturation bombing missions and 2,184 tactical air strikes.

6. In an effort to provide continuity to the allied spoiling campaign in northeast Binh Dinh, seven battalions of the US 1st Air Cavalry Division and two battalions of the US 25th Infantry Division have launched Operation PERSHING in the same general sweep area as THAYER II. No significant enemy contact has as yet developed in this action.

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

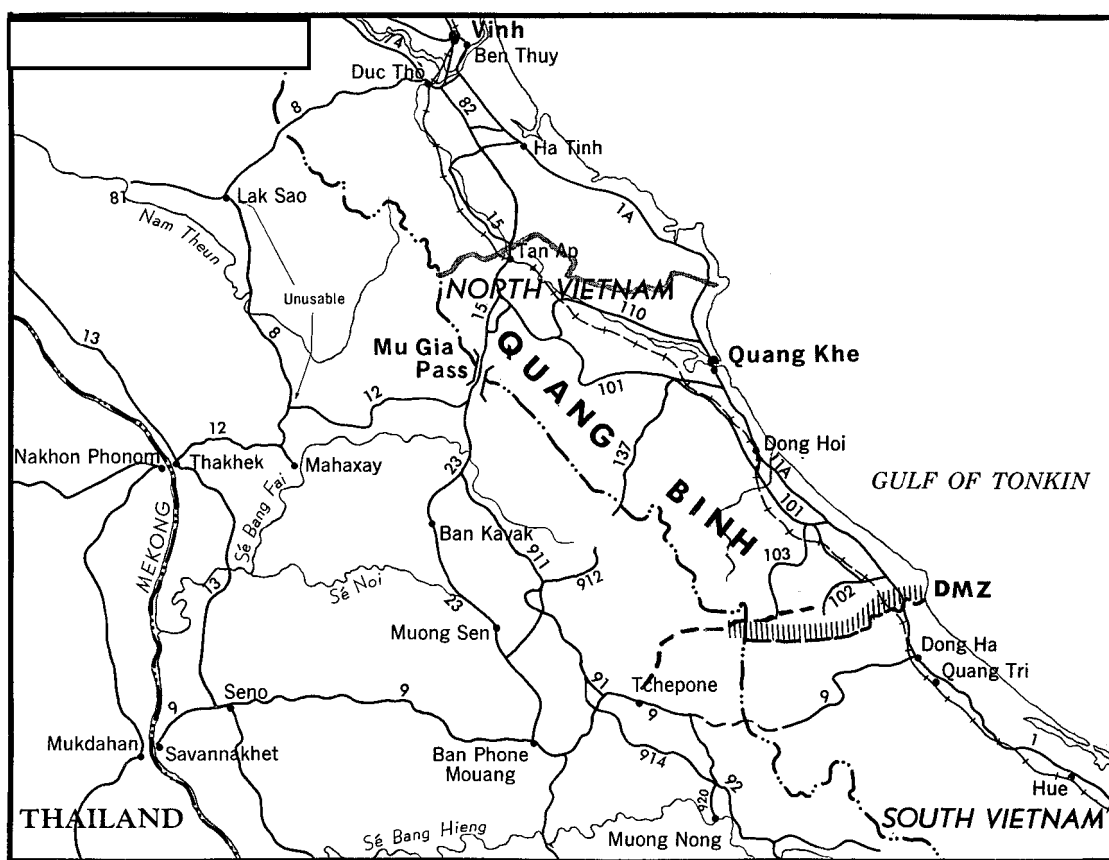
1. Due to the Lunar New Year celebrations, nonmilitary government activity has been at a standstill and, consequently, there is nothing of political significance to report.

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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. During the 8-12 February Tet truce, US air and sea observers reported total sightings of some 1,570 water craft and 2,200 trucks along the coast of or in Quang Binh Province immediately north of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Some of the supplies being transported were undoubtedly in support of units in this province but a large portion were probably destined for further distribution to the DMZ area and into the northern portion of the Laos panhandle.

2. No firm estimate of the tonnage moved south is yet possible because of the forms in which the sightings were reported, but 25,000 tons would appear to be a reasonable order of magnitude, taking into account the likelihood of multiple observations of the same carrier, possibility of round trips, and probable average loads of trucks and water craft. This imprecise estimate is reached by assuming a four-ton load per truck and ten tons per water craft--the rough average of most craft previously used in coastal traffic--and by assuming that multiple counting cancels out round trips.

3. Observers report that during the first 48 hours of the truce, roads in Quang Binh Province were crowded with trucks and that the mouths of four rivers between Vinh and the DMZ were "jammed" with water craft, some forced by overcrowding to stop in estuaries and inlets. After 9 February, coastal water craft traffic fell off drastically, probably due in part to bad weather, but perhaps also because the North Vietnamese used the last day of the truce to disperse and hide the boats.

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[REDACTED]

4. Trucks continued to be sighted after 9 February but the level of traffic could not be estimated because of heavy cloud cover. All through January, truck traffic through Mu Gia Pass into Laos had been at the highest level since the beginning of the current dry season in the Laos panhandle, suggesting that traffic to the pass through Quang Binh Province has been proceeding well.

5. This large resupply effort [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] raises the possibility of offensive actions by North Vietnamese forces now in or just north of the DMZ.

Possible SA-2 Threat in DMZ

6. The North Vietnamese may have taken advantage of the unrestricted in-country movement afforded by the Tet bombing standdown to deploy SAM equipment into the area of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Pilot sightings of trucks and vans moving south in the vicinity of Quang Khe may indicate preparations to establish SAMs farther south than previously.

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. Hanoi radio on 11 February responded negatively to various suggestions for extending the Tet cease-fire. The broadcast called attention to the Liberation Front's seven-day truce and asserted that it "definitely requires no negotiations prior to its execution." Hanoi radio insisted that a clear distinction be drawn between the Liberation Front's seven-day truce and the "trick of effecting a lasting cessation of hostilities," under the "US imperialists' preconditions." The broadcast also attacked the proposal that "both parties de-escalate and reduce all military activities at the same time in order to arrive at negotiations for the cessation of the armed conflict," equating it to a demand that the "Vietnamese people" lay down their arms and "surrender to the US."

2. By this broadcast, Hanoi appears to be ruling out any chance that it will agree to an extension of the Tet cease-fire. It also suggests that the North Vietnamese believe the propaganda advantage they had hoped to achieve by proposing a seven-day truce, after the South Vietnamese Government had announced a four-day truce, is in danger of being lost because of Communist refusal to agree to an extension of the cease-fire.

Soviet Press Calls For Cessation Of US Air Strikes

3. An Izvestia article by Vikentiy Matveyev on 11 February called for the unconditional cessation of US air strikes on North Vietnam as "the most necessary condition" leading toward the establishment of peace in Vietnam. Matveyev asserted that US escalation of the war was responsible for the present state of affairs and "thus, the termination of the American air raids on DRV territory would give the signal for the reverse process--the limiting of the scope of military operations and finally a complete end to them." Matveyev went on to state that "it is up to Washington alone to make such a prospect a reality."

4. This article has triggered Western press speculation that Moscow is hinting that Hanoi will

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respond to a cessation of the air strikes by a de-escalation of its own. The "reverse process" Matveyev talked about, however, only mentioned US actions and, as such, was in keeping with Soviet efforts to pressure the US into a unilateral concession.

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